

**THE MANAGEMENT OF OBSTETRIC DIFFICULTIES.** By Paul Titus, M.D., Obstetrician and Gynecologist to the St. Margaret Memorial Hospital, Pittsburgh. With 446 illustrations and 9 color plates. Fourth Edition. The C. V. Mosby Company, St. Louis, 1950. \$14.00.

This volume of more than a thousand pages has appeared in three previous editions and now is fairly well known to all obstetricians. In this latest edition certain new bits of information and a few revisions of opinions may be found in the sections dealing with abortion, placenta praevia, toxemia of pregnancy, induction of labor, pelvimetry, and obstetric anesthesia, just to mention a few. However, the additions appear to outstrip the revisions, with the result that the book is strangely uneven, retaining many outmoded notions and techniques but at the same time including much material of recent origin. It is unfortunate that the author so often has chosen to quote verbatim and at great length from periodicals and monographs rather than condense such material into a form more useful for one who is seeking a prompt and suitable way out of an "obstetric difficulty." The liberal use of quotation marks can quickly increase the thickness of a book without improving its literary qualities.

While the author takes pains to point out that this volume is not a textbook, since some of the conventional subjects have been excluded, there is little of importance in this book that cannot be found in any of the standard American obstetrical texts. And in at least some of the latter the quality of expression is far superior and perhaps less confusing to the general practitioner. Your reviewer has no quarrel with most of the sound and conservative views set forth in this volume, but he does feel that the text is in need of a severe pruning. To do justice to the intriguing title, the truly difficult obstetric problems should be better illuminated, and much of the boring parade of standard facts and figures should be left to the sources from which they came.

It is noteworthy that Titus has agreed with the editors of two major obstetrical textbooks (Williams and DeLee-Greenhill) regarding uniform definitions for some of the classical obstetrical terms and procedures. This would seem to be a commendable move and should be welcomed by all teachers of the obstetric art since it may eliminate much of the senseless quibbling over minor variations in terminology. On the other hand, one might predict a certain amount of dissatisfaction with the new deal conjured up by these three self-appointed representatives. No set of definitions, however thoughtfully arrived at, could satisfy everyone concerned.

\* \* \*

**PRINCIPLES OF GENERAL PSYCHOPATHOLOGY—An Interpretation of the Theoretical Foundations of Psychopathological Concepts.** By Siegfried Fischer, M.D., Clinical Instructor in Psychiatry, University of California, Formerly Professor of Psychiatry and Neurology, University of Breslau. The Philosophical Library, New York, 1950. 327 pages. \$4.75.

In view of the many schools of thought in present-day psychological theory and practice, it takes courage to present a survey of psychopathological phenomena. This volume is divided into four sections. The first deals with fundamentals of psychopathological concepts—perception, thought, memory, consciousness, unconsciousness, apperception, orientation, emotion, volition, intelligence, language and their disturbances. The second part describes "comprehensible and causal connections" and those connections which become comprehensible through uncovering the unaware. Syndromes or symptom complications of mental disturbances are reviewed in the third section, and the abnormal personality, various types of personalities, the relation of personality to psychoses, and the differences between the neurotic and psychopathic personalities in the last section.

The author has made a sincere and conscientious effort to present his thesis in a well organized, lucid fashion, but the rather stilted, ponderous style and language interfere with the clarity of expression. For example, in describing the symptom in which schizophrenic patients complain of hearing their own thoughts, he calls this "Gedankenlautwerden"; the "relation of reference" is "Zuordnung"; "incoherence" is "Zerfahrenkert"; and "prolixity" is "Weitschweifigkeit." In the discussion of the agnosias and aphasias, the author might well have referred to the work of Henry Head in England and to J. M. Nielsen in this country. An attempt is made to differentiate feeling, affect and mood, but this is not too clear. For instance, "Feelings are related to objects, while affects are relative to 'Sachverhalt.'" The author bases his "dynamic" psychology on what he calls "comprehensible" connections, in contrast to the "causal" approach and method of investigation of the natural sciences. "Psychoanalysis, therefore, is based on comprehensible, not causal, connections, dynamic psychology is based not on the causal principle but the principle of meaning and purpose." It is emphasized that certain connections may become comprehensible through uncovering what is repressed and unaware. In neurotic reactions, anxiety arises from the child's feelings of helplessness. This feeling of helplessness and concomitant feelings of inferiority are regarded as the most profound trauma in the lives of many neurotics, and the author criticizes Freud for regarding "children's needs as exclusively sexual" and overlooking and failing to explain the origin of inferiority feelings. There are many psychoanalysts who would quarrel with such a criticism.

The author believes that "in psychopathology and in psychiatry we assume that all mental processes have a physical basis." He firmly believes, and he has done considerable investigation in this field, that "there is a connection between the anterior lobe of the pituitary, the metabolism, and the psychotic symptoms of schizophrenia." In the discussion of hereditary factors in mental illness, the author fails to mention Kallman's painstakingly detailed studies of identical and non-identical twins suffering from mental illness. Many authors would quarrel with the author's statement that the psychopathic personality has an "innate" predisposition.

There is much that is dogmatically presented and is still quite controversial in this volume on psychopathology. For this reason it is not considered appropriate reading for the medical student. For the general medical man it may be regarded as too technical, and the psychiatrist would find much with which he would disagree. Nevertheless, it provides stimulating reading for those who are interested in psychopathological descriptions and theories.

\* \* \*

**THE LOW FAT, LOW CHOLESTEROL DIET—What to Eat and How to Prepare It.** By E. Virginia Dobbin, Senior Dietitian, E. V. Cowell Memorial Hospital, University of California, Berkeley; Helen F. Gofman, M.D., San Francisco; Helen C. Jones, Home Economist, Berkeley; Lenore Lyon, San Jose; Clara-Beth Young, Dietitian, E. V. Cowell Memorial Hospital, University of California, Berkeley. Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, N. Y., 1951. 371 pages. \$3.45.

The authors have compiled a practical handbook and cookbook on the low-fat, low-cholesterol diet. The presentation is simple and direct, and the text is aimed at answering specific questions concerning *how* such a diet can be constructed without burdening the reader with medical reasons. Details are given on recipes and methods of preparation and cooking of foods to make them palatable although low in fat. The book is well organized, easy and simple to read. It is designed primarily for the housewife.